

Message Text

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15

ACTION SCA-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 VO-03 PPT-01 SCS-03 /016 W

----- 118522

R 010902Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6265

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 4537

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON, CGEN, SN

SUBJECT: CONSULAR CONFERENCE IN EA

REF: STATE 239300 SEPT 76

1. EMBASSY AGREEABLE DEPT'S PLANS TO HOLD CONSULAR CONFERENCE
AT BANGKOK FROM OCT. 26 THRU OCT. 29, 1976.

2. CONOFF ROBERT B. PETERSON WILL ATTEND FOR SINGAPORE. DATES
OF STAY, OCTOBER 25 THROUGH OCTOBER 29.

3. PARTICULAR CONSULAR PROBLEMS SUGGESTED FOR INCLUSION IN AGENDA
ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. SINGAPORE SHARES WITH OTHER S.E.A. POSTS THE PROBLEM OF THE
HANDLING OF INDOCHINESE BOAT CASE REFUGEES. ALL POSTS IN THE
AREA HAVE WORKED CLOSELY WITH UNHCR REPS BUT THEIR EFFORTS
ARE THWARTED BY THE INTRANSIGENCE OF S.E.A. GOVERNMENTS IN
REJECTING THE CONCEPT OF PORT OF FIRST ASYLUM WITHOUT FIRM
GUARANTEES OF REFUGEE ACCEPTANCE ELSEWHERE.

TIME LAGS ON BIO-DATA APPROVAL AND FALCON CLEARANCES, LACK OF
SPONSORS IN THE US, AN INADEQUATE EPP AND THE ABSENCE OF A
TEMPORARY RESETTLEMENT LOCATION HAVE FURTHER STYMIED EFFORTS
FOR A HUMANESOLUTION.

A FULL DISCUSSION AND UPDATE ON USG POSITION WOULD BE VALUABLE
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IN ASSISTING POSTS TO CO-ORDINATE THEIR EFFORTS.

B. ALTHOUGH THE CONSULAR FUNCTION IN SINGAPORE ENCOMPASSES ALL PHASES OF CONSULAR ACTIVITIES MOST CASES ARE ROUTINE AND FEW ARE REALLY PROBLEMATIC. HOWEVER, SINGAPORE DOES EXPERIENCE THE OVER SPILL FROM NEIGHBORING POSTS AND APPROXIMATELY 30 PERCENT OF ALL NIV REFUSALS ARE OUT OF DISTRICT CASES. THE POST HAS ALSO DETECTED ABUSES OF I-20 ISSUANCE BY SCHOOLS IN THE U.S. SPONSORING/RECRUITING PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS. THESE WERE RETURNED TO I.N, S. WASHINGTON. IMMIGRANT VISA INVESTOR APPLICATIONS ARE SHARPLY INCREASING, PARTICULARLY AMONG THOSE OF MAINLAND CHINESE BIRTH DUE TO THE POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY OF THE AREA. THE NEW \$40,000 INVESTMENT REQUIREMENT IS BUT A MARGINAL DETERRENT IN SINGAPORE. THE DELAYS EXPERIENCED IN OBTAINING I-600 ORPHAN PETITIONS AND I-601 WAIVERS THROUGH INS HONG KONG OFTEN RESULT IN CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST CASES. PERHAPS THE CONFERENCE COULD EXPLORE WAYS TO MINIMIZE DELAY. MULTIPLE MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES HAVE ALSO POSED SOME PROBLEMS HERE. DOCUMENTATION OF THE TERMINATION OF A PRIOR MARRIAGE IS FREQUENTLY UNAVAILABLE IN TIME FOR SPONSOR'S TRAVEL. IN VIEW OF THIS, SOME GUIDANCE REGARDING EMERGENCY PASSPORT ISSUANCE MAY BE IN ORDER.

A RECENT ADVISORY OPINION RULED THAT MUSLIM MULTIPLE MARRIAGES, LEGAL IN SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA & BRUNEI, ARE ACCEPTABLE FOR CONFERRING US CITIZENSHIP. DEATH CASES INVOLVING MULTI-MARRIAGES HAVE PRESENTED STICKY SITUATIONS WITH AS MANY AS FOUR WIVES CLAIMING ONE ESTATE.

C. SINGAPORE'S UNIQUE PROBLEM RESULTS FROM A RECENT DECLINE IN THE OFF-SHORE OIL BUSINESS. THE FALL-OUT OF THE GENERAL DECLINE HAS BEEN THE TERMINATION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS FROM THEIR JOBS. FORMER WORKERS WITH PETROLEUM FIRMS ARE NOW APPLYING FOR SUBSISTENCE AND REPATRIATION LOANS. MANY HAVE INCURRED DEBTS LOCALLY AND ARE PROHIBITED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES FROM LEAVING SINGAPORE UNTIL THEIR OBLIGATIONS ARE DISCHARGED. THE SITUATION IS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY SINGAPORE LAW THAT DENIES THEM THE RIGHT TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT ON THE LOCAL JOB MARKET. THIS SITUATION IS ONE WORTHY OF CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION AT THE CONFERENCE.

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